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Ethnic Studies Library

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Ethnic Studies Directed Reading

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For UHM Resource Room
(Submitted by R. Hamasaki
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Life & Land

Foreword

I was born on O'ahu in 1960, and raised in Ewa Beach. I graduated from Campbell High School in 1978. Presently, I am a senior majoring in communications at the University of Hawaii and employed in the hotel industry. This project was done as a directed reading course in the ethnic studies program under the supervision of Richard Hamasaki.

My poems are inspired by my feelings and imagination, especially by my love for the gifts that nature offers. I often take time to enjoy these precious gifts. When I am close to nature I can feel life in the land, sky, sun, wind, and ocean.

I am saddened to see the environment that has been for long periods of time, changed. I feel that fast-paced development and competitive financial investment threaten to further impact our already devastated native Hawaiian culture and environment. If development is inevitable, each project should, if approved, proceed with due respect for the land and its native people. I'm fortunate to have been born and raised in the islands, and to be of Hawaiian blood. These feelings are evident in a number of my poems.

I feel that we, of Hawaii, should be cautious when conforming to outside influences which may further change our local lifestyles. these lifestyles are based on native Hawaiian traditions, and have been spiced by an array of multicultural practices selected from numerous mixtures of ethnic groups who have made Hawaii home. My poem entitled "Transformer" was inspired by these thoughts. I see many local children and young adolescents heavily influenced by outside interests. the "Transformer toy craze" is just one example which particularly struck me. It would be satisfying for me to see our younger generation take a greater interest in Hawaiian culture and language.

I am not totally against all development nor am I biased to other lifestyles. However, I do feel that Hawaii's environment is much too precious

Foreword

and delicate to drastically change. The Hawaiian culture, language and local lifestyles are too important for us and the world to let dwindle into extinction.

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Pele's Tears

Unique is our islands
of volcanic descent
layers upon layers
of hardened tears
over a million years
of flowing tears
Demure displays
of uncertain intent.

Nā Akua O Kaena

Antagonizing road
forces thought
mysterious Kaena
entice me on.
Deeper within
senses arouse
chicken skin
upon my flesh.
Spice of salt
tingle my tongue
I hear Lilino'e
sing her song.
Eyes upon me
wherever I turn
Nā Akua O Kaena
I feel their presence
I feel their grasp.
Firm yet gentle
is their embrace
Nā Akua O Kaena
maintain their hold.

Laka

Her life is hula

dancer among dancers ----- perfection of motion

flowing gracefully or striking fiercely

each movement having meaning

each meaning telling a story

of the beginning, of life, of death!

of the land_{sky} sun_{wind} ocean

She is the force behind each hula

the voice behind each chant.

Feeling Mana

POWERS,

rooted in Hawaiian history.

A seed,

planted into me.

Bursting,

then nourished in my veins.

Generating knowledge, strength, pride...

simply existing

within my soul

in cohesion

with spirits of the 'Āina...

Transformer

Gliding
 down
 the
 cresting
entering wall,
 into
 chambers
 of
 adrenaline flowing
 rushes.

I become a seal
 a young pup.
The ocean is my playground
 the wave
 a precious gift.

DIRT

Dirt

natural resource

Dirt

needed to grow food

Dirt

clean, until man pollutes it

Dirt

helpless, can be moved and manipulated

Dirt

can be smothered with out a fight.

Faces of our islands changing rapidly

by minds

of Kaiser, Hemmeter, Horita...

I feel angry, I feel weak

what could I do?

where could I start?

Frustration

turns me into

DIRT.

'Ōpala Crab

Hau Bush,

once serene shores

now a fucken rubbish dump

the sand crabs live in shet!

PUEO,

Mystical native of Hawaii
someone's family 'aumakua.

Left to wander without a home

after

the

rubble

of the

bulldozer.

Westernized Hawaiian Boy

Great grandson of royal blood!

adapted well to influential ways.

Life within the palms of your hands.

Appear slick in designer clothes.

Cash in your pocket, soda for the nose.

Shining Porsche in the valet lot.

Girls, there at your feet...

Dude, where's it happening tonight?

Life in the fast lane 'ats where it's at.

Get the getting while the getting is right!

Hawaiian man,

when lie down to sleep,

I wonder, do you feel content?

Do you dream of Hawaii as your kupuna spoke?

Are you familiar with their life, do you care to know?

Maybe it hurts--deep inside!

The thoughts of the overthrow of her majesty's throne

along went the sovereignty of your nation.

Supplying housing for the people

crowd them into:

row
after
row
of
finkertoy
houses.

Supplying jobs for the people

construction of:

row
after
row
of
finkertoy
houses.

X

Holding her tight
there was no greater feeling!
Her leaving, the hurt,
there has been none worse!
cutting deep:

healing with time
the scar remains...

Youthful Eyes

Big wide eyes

staring at me

I look into reflections

upon channeled memories

of my own youthful adventures.